



# The Bloomsbury Handbook of Culture and Identity from Early Childhood to Early Adulthood

Perceptions and Implications

Edited by Ruth Wills, Marian de Souza, Jennifer Mata-McMahon, Mukhlis Abu Bakar & Cornelia Roux

"This interdisciplinary book offers a significant contribution to understanding and supporting healthy identity development in children and adolescents, a critical task for ensuring their well-being and, in turn, to the future well-being of the planet. Its range of coverage is remarkable, with contributions by scholars from many countries using varied research methods to investigate diverse identity facets and issues." *Aostre Johnson, Emeritus Professor of Education, Saint Michael's College, Vermont, USA*

"This is an invaluable resource for all those who wish to have a glimpse of how children and young people on all five continents are making use, or struggling, with spirituality, religion, language, gender, education, class and ability in their journey to construct their identity." *Adrian-Mario Gellel, Professor of Early Childhood and Primary Education, University of Malta, Malta*

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How do children determine which identity becomes paramount as they grow into adolescence and early adulthood? Which identity results in patterns of behaviour as they develop? To whom or to which group do they feel a sense of belonging? How might children, adolescents and young adults negotiate the gap between their own sense of identity and the values promoted by external influences? The contributors explore the impact of globalization and pluralism on the way most children and adolescents grow into early adulthood. They look at the influences of media and technology that can be felt within the living spaces of their homes, competing with the religious and cultural influences of family and community, and consider the ways many children and adolescents have developed multiple and virtual identities which help them to respond to different circumstances and contexts. They discuss the ways that many children find themselves in a perpetual state of shifting identities without ever being firmly grounded in one, potentially leading to tension and confusion particularly when there is conflict between one identity and another. This can result in increased anxiety and diminished self-esteem. This book explores how parents, educators and social and health workers might have a raised awareness of the issues generated by plural identities and the overpowering human need to belong so that they can address associated issues and nurture a sense of wholeness in children and adolescents as they grow into early adulthood.

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